

# MINUTES

April 2, 2020

## JOHNSON COUNTY WEED & PEST CONTROL DISTRICT BOARD

### Members Present:

Scott Lutterman, Chairman  
Scott Rogers, Vice Chairman  
Tyler Benton  
Nathan Williams  
Dick Gould – by phone

### Others Present:

Rod Litzel, Supervisor  
Katie Hepp, District Clerk

Meeting was called to order at 5:5 pm by Chairman Lutterman. Minutes for the March 5th meeting were approved with a motion by Scott R. and a second by Dick. Financial Statements for March were reviewed. Scott R. moved to approve the financial statements for the general and leafy spurge funds. Nathan seconded the passing motion. Nathan moved to pay the vouchers and to allow the clerk to write utility, salary, salary related assessments and staff benefit checks as needed. Motion passed after a second from Scott R.

Under old business, Rod reported that he had completed the prairie dog surveys. All had passed inspection; however, on one landowner there are two prairie dog towns that border neighbors with unmanaged towns one is a small town the other a larger town. Even though the prairie dogs are moving in to both treated towns passed inspection and the landowner acknowledges if the rebate is paid by the District this year the towns do not qualify for rebate for three years. Dick moved to pay the rebate of \$1,535 and motion passed after a second from Tyler. Rod gave an update on WASD. Concerns have been raised on the dues being a tier structure; however, dues are voluntary so the tier structure will remain in place as a suggestion. The WASD was a good voice for all special districts at the legislature especially in regards to public records. They made sure that one districts opinion did not take precedence over another, equally represented. Rod reported that there was nothing going on in regards to the new building and removal of the gravel pile is still on hold. However, he had seen a building with a different layout the overhead doors are located on the gable ends of the building resulting in less wasted space that may work better for the District. It was agreed by general consensus that Rod look into a computer app that lets you design a building based on exactly what you need. Rod reported on the activity for the month of March; he worked on grasshopper mapping and legislative issues, Katie took some leave and there were two guys working in the shop. Rod reported that the increase of pesticide registration fees from \$90 to \$140 had passed legislature. This will be an estimated increase from \$600,000 to \$1,500,000 available for grant based projects statewide through SAC. HB38 bill regarding enforcement and private property rights passed after many rewrites. It went through 3 readings at the House, 3 readings at the Senate then to joint committee where it was completely changed so it went to back to a second Joint committee and then finally passed both chambers. Rod reported that he had just below one million gross acres signed up for the grasshopper program which consists of 600,000 acres for a District program and 300,000 for APHIS program. There may be additional acreages as more landowners are contacted, some that were treated last year. Rod lead discussion on the use of a helicopter for areas that cannot be sprayed with a plane, such as hay meadows and closer to creeks. Frontier Helicopter will be here spraying weeds and could do it; but, using a helicopter would be more expensive. Rod asked the Board to give some thought about the cost share regarding the extra expense. Rod announced that he did not have chemical quotes at this time. He also reported that there would have to be a news release notifying the public and a letter will be sent to program participants toward the end of April or first part of May contingent upon the weather. APHIS is not sure of funding; however, Bruce Shambaugh is optimistic that there will be funds available. APHIS administered programs require money up front, the anticipated amount is around \$300,000. Rod explained to the Board how time consuming it is to invoice deposits and a hassle refunding deposits if the program does not happen. Tyler moved the District put the funds in the APHIS escrow account instead of having landowners make deposits. Motion passed unanimously after a second from Scott R. Rod presented the bids for grasshopper spraying; Big Horn Airways \$1.65 to \$1.85 per acre sliding scale dependent on block size, Ag Flyers \$1.65 per acre and Co Fire Aviation \$1.07 per acre. Rod lead discussion on bids: Big Horn Airways; sliding scale makes things more difficult, Ag Flyers; subcontracts to Lindell Air from Illinois that sprayed in 2010, with 6 planes and are trustworthy; and Co Fire Aviation from Fort Morgan Colorado submitted a professional proposal with references, has 3 planes to commit, can fly at night and can spray 50,000 acres a day. Scott R. moved to accept the bid from Co Fire Aviation. Tyler seconded the passing motion. Rod estimated the cost of chemical to be \$1.55 to \$1.60 per acre, reported that he had submitted a grant request in the amount of \$140,000 that can be dedicated to state lands, BLM funds are in place for their share and asked the Board to set cost share. It was agreed by general consensus landowner pay \$1.00 per treated acre for grasshopper program. The Board discussed if the neighboring counties had grasshopper programs. Rod reported that Natrona County and Sheridan County are unknown; but, Campbell County and Converse County have established programs. Rod asked the Board about cost sharing on small acreage program that do not tie in with the aerial blocks. Board agreed by general consensus that they may cost share on chemical; but, will not provide or cost share on labor. Rod reported that he had spoken with a Honda dealer who said that \$6,000 was a good price for the 2017 Honda Pioneer 700 to sell outright. Board agreed by general consensus to sell the Pioneer for \$6,000. Rod presented the bids for a Honda 500; Valley Motor – 2020 Honda 500 \$9,045 minus Gator trade \$2,800 plus doc fee= \$6,320, Casper Mountain Motor Sports – 2020 Honda 500 \$9,934 minus Gator trade \$2,200= \$7,734, there was no bid submitted as requested for a Honda Pioneer from Action Motorsports, and a bid from Masek Distributing, Inc 2020 Kawasaki Mule \$8,269 minus Gator trade \$4,500 plus freight \$200= \$3,969. The Board discussed the belt driven Kawasaki vs the Honda 500's. Scott R. moved and Nathan seconded the motion to accept the bid from Valley Motor Honda. Motion passed.

Under new business Rod lead discussion on the Cargo trailer. It is currently being used to haul the Viking for the crew which works nicely for backpacks and chemical; however, it is wide, heavy and difficult to pull. Would it be best to trade for a 20' to 22' flatbed that is more versatile? It was agreed to keep the cargo trailer for now. Rod reported that the SAC committee had more funds than request so he had submitted a grant in amount of \$30,000 for Salt Cedar for next fiscal year budget. The grant was approved. Rod reported that Warne Chemical had sent a flyer offering herbicides in smaller container sizes for small acreage landowners wanting herbicide at the cost share. Rod will talk to MTR and the Co-op about offering these in the vendor coupon program. Rod reported that Kaput-D could be purchased on a pre-buy at a 20% discount on orders of \$3,500. Board tabled this until the next meeting giving Rod time to check with landowners that have used both Rozol and Kaput-D. Rod reported that they had a meeting regarding the Weed Bounty Program. There are plenty of funds for another season; but, asked the Board if they would donate a backpack sprayer as an award. Board agreed to donation. Rod reported that he had talked to Zach, Conservation District, about having a joint tour of Mudusahead and Ventenata. Rod lead discussion on having the tour on the afternoon of the year end meeting or in July before the budget hearing. It was agreed to have a joint tour with the Conservation District after the year end meeting. Rod will also invite the County Commissioners, Senator Kinskey and Representative Tass. Rod lead discussion on seasonal crews; one returning crew member, word of a guy that wants to work and one that has picked up an application, the guys have not returned applications. The guy that picked up an application has MS, he knows the country, the landowners and is a hard worker who could work independently. Rod received an application and hired Ashlee Hullinger who worked two years for Sweetwater County Weed & Pest and had been certified before, and Rick Litzel who is currently working on getting certified. Due to nepotism conflict Rod ask the Board to make the decision on hiring Rick. Tyler moved and Dick seconded the passing motion to hire Rick as the County Road crew boss due to his previous management experience and at the rate set forth in District policy. He has also received an application from Isolina Nimick who is interested in the road crew. Rod reported that there are concerns about the Covid-19 and having more than one person in a vehicle. Rod reported that the county offices are restricting traffic due to the Covid-19, there is some direction from the White House on use of sick leave and that more direction to come. Board agreed to keep functioning according to the Counties' policy unless they decide otherwise. Rod presented the estimates for LGLP renewal the current premium is \$2,027 with a deductible of \$5,000. Nathan moved to keep LGLP the same. Motion passed after a second from Dick.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by unanimous ballot at 7:00 pm and the Board reviewed 2019. The next regular business meeting will be May 7th at 5 pm.

